

OLC 76-1195

W 17

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 21, 1976

Dear Mr. Chairman:

It is my understanding that the Select Committee expects to publish in its final report the budget figure for the Intelligence Community.

It is my belief that the net effect of such a disclosure could adversely affect our foreign intelligence efforts and therefore would not be in the public interest.

Over the past two years both Houses of Congress have voted by overwhelming margins against the disclosure of information concerning our foreign intelligence budget. I believe that these votes reflect the judgment of the Congress, which I also hold, that such disclosure over a period of time would reveal information helpful to our foreign adversaries.

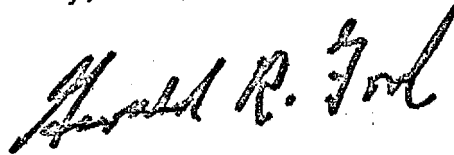
Director of Central Intelligence George Bush has briefed your Committee on the harm to United States foreign intelligence agencies that could result from publication of this budget information. He is available for further discussion of this issue with the Committee members.

I urge the Committee to reconsider its position. In assuring that our foreign intelligence agencies are held accountable to the public, we must not undermine their

2

capability to provide the foreign intelligence needed by me and other elected and appointed officials in order to meet our constitutional responsibilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gerald R. Ford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

The Honorable Frank Church  
Chairman  
Select Committee to Study  
Governmental Operations with  
Respect to Intelligence Activities  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C. 20510

cc: The Honorable John Tower  
Vice Chairman